

JAPANESE IMMIGRATION AND COLONIZATION

A COUNTER BRIEF

TO THAT OF MR. V. S. McCLATCHY, SENATE DOCUMENT
No. 55, SIXTY-SEVENTH CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

SUBMITTED

IN BEHALF OF THE CALIFORNIA COMMITTEE
OF JUSTICE AND OTHER CITIZENS



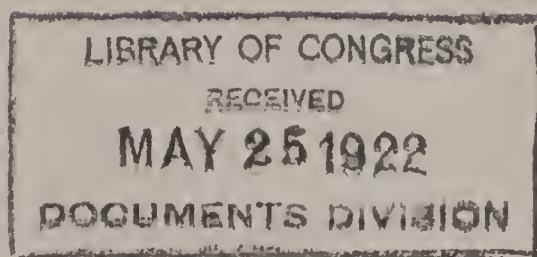
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COUNTER BRIEF.

To the Senate of the United States:

This counter brief is filed in behalf of the California Committee of Justice, and other citizens, as above.

Mr. McClatchy's brief is composed of personal statements, most of which were published by him in his paper, the Sacramento Bee, and then quoted by him from the Bee as authority for his repetition of them. They cover events in Korea, China, Siberia, and the conduct of Japan in the World War and at the Versailles peace conference. These matters are not relevant in any discussion of what is known as the Japanese question in California, which relates solely to the treatment of Japanese who are legally domiciled in this country and in possession of rights under the treaty and under our own Constitution and laws. Mr. McClatchy's brief is tiresomely repetitious, apparently in the belief that a fiction often enough repeated becomes a fact and a proper foundation for a national policy.

The real questions involved are: The volume of Japanese population in California; the Japanese birth rate here; the observance by Japan of the "gentlemen's agreement"; and the Japanese freeholds and leaseholds upon land in this State.

Mr. McClatchy and his associates in the anti-Japanese agitation here led off with an estimate of California's Japanese population at 150,000, and by some of them put at 200,000. To reconcile these estimates with the official reports of the national immigration service it was charged that great numbers of Japanese had been illegally smuggled into the State. To support this it was published on authority of Mr. McClatchy that Mr. John W. Abercrombie, Assistant Secretary of Labor, had officially reported to the United States Senate that in the year ending June 30, 1919, 9,678 Japanese had been found to be here illegally and were deported by our Federal authorities.

Upon investigation it was found that Mr. Abercrombie's report was that in the 11 years ending June 30, 1919, 4,000 aliens of all classes had been found illegally in the United States and deported. The paper that first published, on Mr. McClatchy's authority, the 9,678 story, refused to correct the fiction and would not publish the correct report, nor was the correction given circulation by the press of the State.

The State board of control officially reported partly from the Immigration Bureau the arrivals and departures, and from the State board of health the births, showing a Japanese population in 1920 of 87,279, stating, however, that this number was reached by using "approximations" and "proportionate" shares; that is to say, using opinions instead of statistics.

By request of the board of control the Japanese Association of America completed a census in March, 1920, showing the population to be 78,628. The Federal census in 1920, which was very careful and complete, showed a population of 70,196, or a total of 2 per cent of the whole population of the State, which was 3,426,861. The difference between the Federal census and the "approximations" and "proportionate" estimates of the State board of control is 17,088. But none of these three reports of population reach the 100,000 and 150,000 figures of Mr. McClatchy and the anti-Japanese agitators. The fact is that the Japanese 2 per cent of our total population is so small that there are thousands of people in California who never saw a Japanese.

Passing now to the Japanese birth rate. The Federal census shows 44,364 Japanese males and 25,832 females in the State. From 1908 to 1920 the total Japanese births in the State were 34,083. In 1920 alone the white births were 59,655, or in one year outnumbering the Japanese births by 25,572 for the whole preceding period of 12 years. These figures are from the records of the State board of health, which reports through its vital registrar, Mr. Ross, that the Japanese birth rate is not excessive. All of these birth statistics being official, it is at once evident that our 2 per cent of Japanese are not making much headway in outbreeding our 98 per cent of non-Japanese people.

Of Mr. McClatchy's case there remain the "gentlemen's agreement" and Japanese freeholds and leaseholds. It is worth considering that if the principle of the "gentlemen's agreement" could be used with the governments of all nations from which immigrants flock to this country, our immigration policy would be very cheaply administered, and with results much more satisfactory, socially and economically.

Japan agreed to restrict the migration of her laboring class to this country by a drastic limitation based upon her laboring people already domiciled here, by permitting migration only to parents, wives, or children of her subjects predomiciled, and to those with preacquired farming interests, this regulation to be enforced by the passport system. Our Immigration Bureau has ever since officially testified to the rigid observance of this agreement by the Japanese Government. If we could replace our expatriation treaties with all other Governments by such an agreement many difficulties would be solved. As there is no evidence that Japan has not kept absolute

faith in the "gentlemen's agreement," as a party to an honorable arrangement, what better result could be expected from an exclusion act, to which she is not a party, but which throws all the responsibility upon the United States and in its enforcement will supply constant friction between these two nations? We are safe in concluding that an exclusion act is favored by that element amongst us that desires to affront Japan and perpetuate hatred and prejudice.

There remains the matter of Japanese land freeholds and leaseholds. The official report of the California Board of Control shows that in 1920 Japanese, under leasehold and freehold, cultivated $1\frac{6}{10}$ per cent of the farm land of California. That report fails to deal truthfully with the productive character of this land in its primitive state. Many leaseholds were idle and uncultivated because of the barren quality of the soils. Japanese farmers expend the labor and devote the intelligent methods by which such soils are added to the productive capacity of the State. The same is true of a large part of the Japanese freeholds, consisting of land avoided by white farmers. The useful fiction has been created that where Japanese farmers occupy land white farmers give up their holdings and retreat, so we have many pitiful pictures drawn of the ruin of white farmers by the "usurpation" of Japanese. But in all the official investigations of the question no such distressed white farmer has ever been found to give evidence supporting the charge. On the other hand, the counties that have largely increased in their white rural population are those in which Japanese farmers have acquired leaseholds and freeholds.

When the persecution of the Chinese expelled them from the State, our available farm labor was so reduced that 568,000 acres of farm land ceased to be cultivated and land values fell. This was the economic vacuum that drew in the Japanese, and their expertness as intensive farmers was soon exhibited in the rise of land values, and land that had fallen to \$10 per acre rose in price to hundreds of dollars per acre.

In order to excite alarm and prejudice and hatred against the Japanese on the land question, one member of the anti-Japanese League published that Japanese had leased 10,000,000 acres in the upper part of the Sutter Basin. That tract lies between the Sacramento and Feather Rivers, and contains only 60,000 acres. Later the author of the tale corrected it by saying the Japanese leaseholds in that basin covered only 10,000 acres. Now, the fact was that no Japanese ever leased an acre of land in the Sutter Basin, for the reason that the owner, Mr. Armour, had forbidden leasing to them. These statements and many like them were the anti-Japanese material in the campaign of 1920. But, though the facts were denied publicly by the press of the State, nearly a quarter of a million of the voters voted against the anti-Japanese initiative which denied leaseholds to the Japanese and tore their children from parental guardianship and committed them to the guardianship of the public administrator.

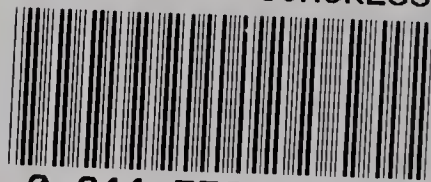
The two foremost newspapers in the expulsion of the Chinese were the Los Angeles Times and Mr. McClatchy's Sacramento Bee. These have also been the leading organs in supporting the anti-Japanese agitation. But, when Mr. McClatchy turned his newspaper against

the Japanese, he also advocated modification of the Chinese exclusion act so as to admit Chinese to replace Japanese, and the Los Angeles Times demanded that a million Chinese be admitted to take the place of our 70,000 Japanese. In view of these glaring inconsistencies and of the facts involved in the controversy, it is no wonder that a majority of the voters of California have never voted against the Japanese. In 1920 the registered vote of the State was 1,374,184. The vote for the anti-Japanese initiative was 668,483; so that 705,701 voters were indifferent or opposed to the measure.

For the foregoing reasons we pray the honorable Senate to not sacrifice the economic interests of California and international friendship, good will and desirable commercial intercourse for the gratification of a minority of our people and the advancement of the selfish interests of a few politicians.



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